

GRANDMOTHER'S KITCHEN.

The heart of the home, to the household band,
Was that square old-fashioned room;
Unpainted, but polished with soap and sand,
And swept with a hemlock broom.
Its split-bottomed chairs were the easiest
known,
Tilted against the wall;
And the rocker that creaked, that was grand-
mother's own,
Was the restful of all.

Its dresser shelves were the kitchen's pride,
With pewter plates arow,
And platters and porringers, small and wide,
That gleamed in the bright light of the glow.
While General Washington's honored face,
On a pitcher of high degree,
Tranquilly shared the toymost place
With a tankard from over the sea.

O'er the mantelpiece a shadow fell
From grandfather's trusty gun
That served the country, sure and well,
In the battle of Benning.
Below, there were candlesticks quaint and old,
And a lacquered snuffers' tray—
With candles drawn from a shapely mold,
And a tinder box away.

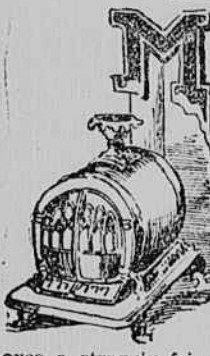
But the cheeriest, dearest sight to see
Was the fireplace, glowing bright,
When the blaze rolled upward, clear and free,
And the chimney back shone white.
The iron teakettle sang on the crane,
The ashes filtered down,
While grandmother stirred the coals amain,
That the spider cake might brown.

There was plenty of work for all to do,
Borne on the seasons' tide;
Carding, and spinning, and weaving, too—
Bleaching and dyeing beside;
Corn, and pumpkins, and apples to dry—
Butter and cheese to make,
Sausage to chop, and doughnuts to fry,
And such ovenful to bake!

There was music in the spinning-wheel,
There was music in the loom;
The common work, for the common weal,
Kept hearts and hands in tune.
O! there's nothing memory finds more dear,
Searching a lifetime through,
Than the homely thrift and the hearty cheer
That grandmother's kitchen knew!

THE CHURCH STOVE.

Why a Scheming Parent Gave His Consent.



Mr. MOPPET was coming in from the garden path. Nancy, with plump, white arms bared to the elbow, was washing the breakfast dishes in a deep pan of hot soapuds.

Mr. Moppet was a hard-featured elderly man, with whitish blue eyes, a straggly fringe of white beard beneath his square chin and bald cranium.

Nancy was fresh-colored and bright-eyed, with silky tendrils of auburn hair drooping over her freckled forehead and a certain dimple perpetually playing at hide and seek on her left cheek.

The two completely realized Shakespeare's ideal of "Crabbed age and youth."

"I'm a going to town," said Mr. Moppet. "You won't need to bile no pot victuals for dinner. Waste makes want. A cup o' tea and a biled egg and what's left o' yesterday's pork and greens—that'll be all you'll need."

"Yes, father," acquiesced Nancy. "And, talkin' 'bout eggs," added Mr. Moppet, "you may take four dozen up to Peach farm. Mrs. Wixon wants plenty on 'em to make cake for her niece's party. Better go early this morning."

"Can't I send 'em up by little Bill Becker, father?" said she. "Webster Wixon will be there, and—and I don't like Webster Wixon, with his red nose and his compliments."

Mr. Moppet frowned. "Nancy," said he, "don't be a fool. I can see through ye, like ye was a pane o' glass. Webster Wixon is a well-to-do man, with money out at interest, and you'd oughter be tickled to death that he'd took a notion to you."

"I know jest exactly what's comin'." It's that foolish nonsense about Absalom Parker. No daughter o' mine ain't goin' to marry your Grandfather Atkins' hired man, not if I know it.

"Take them eggs straight up to the Peach farm," reiterated Mr. Moppet. Webster Wixon, a fat, middle-aged bachelor, was out helping to gather the October apples on the north side of the



house when Nancy came up. He made haste to welcome her. "Good mornin', Miss Nancy," said he. "As bloomin' as ever, I see."

"Here's your eggs," spoke Nancy, curtly. "Sit down a spell, won't ye?" simpered Mr. Wixon.

"I'm in a hurry," said Nancy. "But, Nancy—"

"My name is Miss Moppet, sir!" "Nancy—Miss Moppet—I must speak!" blurted out the old fellow. "I love you better'n all the world. There, that's what I had on my mind. And your good, Christian-minded father, he says it would suit him exactly, and—"

Nancy wheeled around and faced her eager swain.

"Is it me or father you're a-courting?" said she.

"Why, you, of course."

"Then take my answer—no!"

And without waiting for the return of

her basket she hurried away, her cheeks blazing, her breath coming very quick and fast.

Mr. Moppet drove leisurely to Horn Hill, drove an excellent bargain for a highly ornamented wood stove and set forth with it in his wagon just after dusk.

"It's a warm day for this time of year," said he, "and it's easier traveling for the horse after dark."

"It ain't a bad day's work, come to think on't. I beat Brother Piper down pretty well on the price and it's worth one dollar and a-half to cart the things home over these bumpy roads. They 'lowed twenty dollars for it and I got it for fifteen dollars."

"Taken" my time and trouble and wheel wear and horseflesh into consideration, I guess I won't say nothin' about the odd five dollars. I'd like one the same fashion in my best room, and—with a long whistle—"why shouldn't I have it?"

"There's that second-handed stove that Granter Atkins took for a debt from Solon Grubb. I'll fetch it home to-morrow and black it up and let Elder Meacham suppose I got a bargain from somebody, and I'll have the nice new stove for myself and nobody'll be none the wiser now that Granter Atkins is confined to the bed with creepin' paralysis and Absalom Parker's up in the wood lot choppin' down trees for winter firewood."

He drew rein opposite the Atkins house. All was dark and quiet there save the one red light that burned in old Mr. Atkins' bedroom.

It was no difficult task for a man of John Moppet's physical strength skillfully to lift the old stove out of its place in the outer shed into his wagon.

"Git up, Prince!" he muttered to his horse, shaking the reins, and away he went.

"Mr. Atkins is took wuss," said Absalom one afternoon, standing at the doorway. "Wants to see you—right off."

Grandfather Atkins lay among the pillows, like a wrinkled old ghost. "John," said he, "all I've got in the world is yours, but I think I'd ought to tell you where I've hid it sense the bank robbery gave me such a scare."

"I've hid it away—"

John Moppet placed his ear close to the pallid lips.

"Six five-hundred-dollar bills, folded up in an old number of the Horn Hill Gazette! In the old stove out in the shed!" gasped the old man. "I knowed nobody wouldn't be likely to look for 'em there! It's yours, John Moppet—every cent of it."

So speaking, the old miser closed his dim eyes and went where there is neither money nor counting of money.

John Moppet uttered an exceedingly bitter cry as he remembered the lighted

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